



*Office of Public Affairs  
U.S. Embassy, Wellington*

4 November 2004

**STATEMENT ON THE U.S. ELECTIONS FROM AMBASSADOR SWINDELLS:**

I want to begin by thanking all the Americans in New Zealand who took the time to vote. It is very important to me that your voice was heard. The response from Americans here was extraordinary. Compared to last election, the Embassy and Auckland Consulate had four times as many Americans request information on how to cast an absentee ballot. The turnout here is reflective of the mood at home, where there are indications that voter turnout set an all-time record.

I also want to thank all those New Zealanders who sent their best wishes to the candidates and to the United States, both today and over the course of the campaign. We appreciate Prime Minister Clark's warm congratulatory remarks. I know that the President is looking forward to meeting up with her at APEC later this month. I can assure Kiwis that the US Government will continue to work towards a lively, fully-engaged bilateral relationship. We want our relationship with New Zealand to be all it can be.

My wife Caroline and I congratulate the President and the First Lady, the Vice President and Mrs. Cheney, and the Republican team on a hard-earned victory.

We also congratulate Senator Kerry and Mrs. Heinz-Kerry, Senator and Mrs. Edwards, and their supporters on a well-fought campaign and a gracious concession.

I am proud that Americans are passionate about their democracy. I am a great believer in doing your civic duty, and over the years I have campaigned for both Republican and Democratic candidates. I applaud those who campaigned for either ticket- and I understand the elation on one side and disappointment on the other.

Now that the result is in, I pledge, along with both President Bush and Senator Kerry, to work on behalf of a united America to labor with the rest of the world to face our shared challenges. As the President said today, we all have "One future that binds us."